

The Tragedy of Hamlet

Thereto prickt on by a most emulate pride,
 Dar'd to the combate ; in which our valiant *Hamlet*,
 (For so this side of our knowne world esteem'd him)
 Did slay this *Fortinbrasse*, who by a seal'd compact,
 Well ratified by Law and Heraldry,
 Did forfeit (with his life) all these his lands
 Which he stood seiz'd of, to the Conquerour :
 Against the which a moiety competent
 Vvas gaged by our King, which had returne
 To the inheritance of *Fortinbrasse*,
 Had he bin vanquish't ; as by the same co-mart,
 And carriage of the Articles designe,
 His fell to *Hamlet* : now fir, young *Fortinbrasse*,
 Of unimproved metall, hot, and full,
 Hath in the skirts of *Norway* here and there
 Sharkt up a list of lawlesse resolute,
 For food and diet to some enterprise
 That hath a stomacke in't, which no other
 As it doth well appeare unto our state,
 But to recover of us by strong hand
 And tearmes compulsatory, those foresaid lands
 So by his father lost : and this I take it
 Is the maine motive of our preparations,
 The source of this our watch, and the chiefe head
 Of this poste haste, and romeage in the land.

Bar. I thinke it be no other but even so :
 VVell may it fort that this portentous figure
 Comes armed through our watch so like the King
 That was and is the question of these warres.

Hora. A mote it is to trouble the mindes eye.
 In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
 A little ere the mightiest *Julius* fell,
 The graves stood tenantlesse, and the sheeted dead
 Did squeake and gibber in the Roman streets,
 As starres with traines of fire, and dewes of blood,
 Disasters in the sunne, and the moist starre,
 Upon whose influence *Neptunes* Empire stands,
 VVas sicke almost to Doomeday with eclipse,

And

Prince of Denmarke.

And even the like precurse of fierce events,
 As harbingers preceding still the fates
 And Prologue to the *Omen* comming on,
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
 Unto our Climates and Countymen.

Enter Ghost.

But soft, behold ! lo where it comes againe,
 Ile crosse it though it blast me : Stay illusion,
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
 Speake to me : if there be any good thing to be done,
 That may to thee doe ease, and grace to me,
 Speake to me.

If thou art privie to thy Countries fate,
 Which happely foreknowing may avoid,
 O speake :

Or if thou hast uphoorded in thy life
 Extorted treasure in the wombe of earth,
 For which they say your spirits oft walke in death,
 Speake of it, stay and speake ; stop it *Marcellus*.

Mar. Shall I strike it with my partisan ?

Hor. Doe if it will not stand.

Bar. 'Tis here.

Hor. 'Tis here.

Mar. 'Tis gone.

We doe it wrong, being so Majesticall,
 To offer it the shew of violence :
 For it is as the aire, invulnerable,
 And our vaine blowes malicious mockery.

Bar. It was about to speake when the cocke crew.

Hor. And then it started, like a guilty thing
 Upon a fearefull summons : I have heard,
 The cocke, that is the trumpet to the morne,
 Doth with his lofty and shrill sounding throat
 Awake the God of day ; and at his warning,
 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or aire,
 Th'extravagant and erring spirit hies
 To his confine ; and of the truth herein
 This present object made probation,

Mar.